

Press Release

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Greenup Main Lock Chamber Opens After Repairs

HUNTINGTON, WV... Work has been completed on the main lock chamber at the Greenup Locks and Dam on the Ohio River, and it should be open for navigation traffic again by late this evening (Thursday, Oct. 30).

Ohio River barge traffic has experienced delays as a result of ongoing repairs to the gates on the main chamber at the Greenup Locks. Crews sealed off the lock chamber Sept. 8 and drained the water to inspect the gates and make repairs. Original plans called for the closing to last three weeks, but additional problems related to the age of the chamber gates was uncovered during the inspection and forced a delay in the re-opening of the lock. The gates were installed when the Greenup Locks were placed into operation in 1959.

Work was scheduled to wrap up Nov. 7, but two crews working 10-hour shifts managed to get the job done seven days ahead of schedule.

The main chamber is 1200 feet long and capable of passing barge tows in a single lock-through. While the repairs were being made, traffic was routed through the smaller, 600-foot-long chamber. As a result, barge traffic was forced to split in two in order to pass through the smaller chamber, and that

caused a traffic jam on the Ohio River. As of this morning, 22 tows were waiting in line at Greenup – an average delay of more than 36 hours.

Based on an average cost of \$500 per hour to operate tows, today's delay of 36 hours for 22 tows will cost the navigation industry \$396,000. The main chamber was out of commission for 53 days.

The delay also caused problems for several power plants along the Ohio River, as coal supplies dwindled, forcing some to seek alternate (and more expensive) shipping methods.

For more information contact Steve Wright at (304) 399-5352.